

### ***H.R. 3590 – Reconciliation: Just the Facts!***

**What is Reconciliation?** The Reconciliation process was created through the Budget Act of 1974. From its inception it was intended as a measure to give Congress greater authority to enforce the *budget resolution*. As such, reconciliation was designed to be limited in scope, focused explicitly on budgetary matters, not as a vehicle to pass comprehensive health care reform.

**Why are Democrats Using Reconciliation to Pass Health Care?** By manipulating the spirit of the reconciliation process, the majority can use it to pass controversial legislation because Senate rules limit the amount of debate that can take place on reconciliation bills. Furthermore, it requires only 51 Senators to pass a reconciliation Bill, versus the 60 normally required to pass legislation in the Senate. In other words, the majority is attempting to use reconciliation as a procedural solution to solve a political problem that is unpopular even within its own party.

**Why is Reconciliation Wrong for Health Care Reform?** By passing reconciliation, Democrats will attempt to “deem” the controversial Senate Bill, H.R. 3590, *automatically passed*, thereby avoiding an actual up or down vote on the Bill in the House. Moreover, since provisions of a reconciliation Bill must have budgetary impacts, many of the controversial elements in the existing Senate Bill may not be changed through reconciliation. In short, using reconciliation to pass health care reform severely “bends the rules” and allows law makers to “hide” behind a budgetary measure that subverts the true democratic spirit of our government.

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*Congressman Todd Akin's "Quick Takes" are a brief look at an aspect of a current hot topic. March 17, 2010*

